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UPI-7

(CUBANS)

WASHINGTON--SHARP OPPOSITION DEVELOPED IN CONGRESS TODAY TO ANY PLAN FOR THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO PAY PART OF THE RANSOM DEMANDED BY FIDEL CASTRO FOR CUBAN INVASION PRISONERS.

CONGRESSIONAL SOURCES SAID THEY UNDERSTOOD THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS PREPARED TO PUT UP "LOTS OF MONEY" TO HELP FREE THE MORE THAN 1,000 CUBANS CAPTURED IN THE ABORTIVE INVASION LAST YEAR.

THESE SOURCES GAVE NO ESTIMATE ON EXACTLY HOW MUCH FEDERAL MONEY MIGHT BE USED. CASTRO IS DEMANDING ABOUT \$62 MILLION FOR RELEASE OF THE PRISONERS.

SEN. JOHN J. WILLIAMS, R-DEL., URGED PRESIDENT KENNEDY YESTERDAY TO DENY REPORTS THAT FEDERAL FUNDS WOULD BE INVOLVED. THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND WHITE HOUSE DECLINED COMMENT.

REP. A.S. HERLONG, D-FLA., WIRED THE PRESIDENT THAT A TAXPAYERS' RANSOM WOULD BE "REPUGNANT TO OUR TRADITIONS."

REP. JOHN J. RHODES, R-ARIZ., IN A TELEGRAM TO THE WHITE HOUSE QUOTED CHARLES C. PINCKNEY, U.S. MINISTER TO FRANCE, WHO SAID IN 1797 "MILLIONS FOR DEFENSE BUT NOT ONE CENT FOR TRIBUTE."

REP. WILLIAM CRAMER, R-FLA., DECLARED: "IT IS TIME TO LET THE PEOPLE OF THE COUNTRY KNOW WHAT THIS DEAL IS. THIS WHOLE DEAL SMELLS WHICH IS OBVIOUS BECAUSE OF ITS SECRET NATURE."

THE CONGRESSIONAL SOURCES SAID THEY WERE INFORMED U.S. FUNDS WOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE BY THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, WHOSE BUDGET IS SECRET.

10/11--GE 855 A

UPI-66

ADD 1 CUBANS, WASHINGTON (UPI-7)

AT A WHITE HOUSE NEWS BRIEFING TODAY, PRESS SECRETARY PIERRE SALINGER TURNED ASIDE ALL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CUBAN SITUATION AND EFFORTS TO FREE THE INVASION PRISONERS. HE DECLINED FLATLY TO DISCUSS THE REPORTS ABOUT FEDERAL PARTICIPATION IN RANSOM FUNDS. "I'M NOT GOING TO DISCUSS ANYTHING REGARDING CUBA NOW," HE ASSERTED.

10/11--DP 1145 AED

UPI-73

ADD 2 CUBANS, WASHINGTON

A REPUBLICAN HOUSE MEMBER DEMANDED A CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION OF REPORTS THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT MIGHT PAY PART OF THE RANSOM FOR CUBAN INVASION PRISONERS.

CPYRGHT

- 2 -

REP. WILLIAM C. CRAMER, R-FLA., ASKED FOR "IMMEDIATE HEARINGS" ON NEGOTIATIONS WITH CUBAN PREMIER FIDEL CASTRO FOR RELEASE OF THE PRISONERS. HE MADE THE DEMAND IN IDENTICAL LETTERS TO CHAIRMEN CLARENCE CANNON, D-MO., OF THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE AND THOMAS MORGAN, D-PA., OF THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.

CRAMER SAID HE WAS "DEEPLY DISTURBED" BY THE NEGOTIATIONS, ESPECIALLY BY REPORTS OF PROPOSALS TO PAY SOME OF THE RANSOM "IN DOLLARS FROM CIA FUNDS."

"THIS IS ABOUT THE GREATEST ABUSE OF PRESIDENTIAL DISCRETION AS I CAN REMEMBER IN THE HISTORY OF THIS COUNTRY," CRAMER WROTE. HE SAID HE NEVER HAD VOTED FOR ANY BILL "THAT WOULD PERMIT THE PRESIDENT TO SPEND THE TAXPAYERS' MONEY TO PAY OFF RANSOM AND INDEMNITY DEMANDS, TO GIVE IN TO BLACKMAIL THREATS BY AN ENEMY GOVERNMENT AND, IN PARTICULAR, FIDEL CASTRO."

"IF THE CONGRESS DOES NOT STOP THIS UNWHOLESOME, DEGRADING AND HUMILIATING BLACKMAIL DEAL, THE PRESTIGE OF THE UNITED STATES WILL BE FOREVER IRREPARABLY HARMED," HE SAID.

10/11--GE 1208 P

UPI-103

ADD 3 CUBANS, WASHINGTON (UPI-73)

CRAMER LATER VOICED THE SAME DEMANDS IN A BRIEF SPEECH ON THE HOUSE FLOOR WHICH BROUGHT AN ACID REJOINER FROM REP. BARRATT O'HARA, D-ILL., THE ONLY SURVIVING VETERAN OF THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR LEFT IN CONGRESS.

O'HARA SUGGESTED THAT CRAMER MIGHT BE A GOOD MAN "TO LEAD THE ARMY" IF AN AMERICAN FORCE EVER SHOULD HAVE TO GO INTO CUBA.

"IF HE SHOOTS AS LOUD AS HE TALKS," O'HARA TOLD THE HOUSE, "LORD HELP THE ENEMY!"

10/11--DP 124 PED